

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 8—SENATORS RHOADS; BROWER,
CEGAVSKE, GUSTAVSON, HALSETH, HARDY, HORSFORD,
KIECKHEFER, MCGINNESS, ROBERSON AND SETTELMAYER

MARCH 9, 2011

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Urges Congress to enact legislation or take other appropriate action to expedite and streamline the requirements for conducting mining operations in this State. (BDR R-1035)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in **bolded italics** is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging Congress to enact legislation or take other appropriate action to expedite and streamline the requirements for conducting mining operations in this State.

1 WHEREAS, Since the earliest days of statehood, the State of
2 Nevada has been known for containing vast deposits of minerals
3 located throughout the State, including copper, gold, silver, lithium,
4 molybdenum, barite and other minerals essential to the security,
5 economy, technological innovation, conventional and renewable
6 energy infrastructure and daily life of the United States; and

7 WHEREAS, Because of the availability of those mineral deposits,
8 mining is an important industry in the State of Nevada and has
9 traditionally provided many high-paying jobs for local communities
10 and has contributed to the communities in other ways such as
11 investing in infrastructure and services for those communities; and

12 WHEREAS, The reliance of the United States on foreign sources
13 of many important minerals impedes economic recovery, limits
14 economic growth and creates vulnerabilities in the chain of supply
15 that potentially threatens the national security of the United States;
16 and



* S J R 8 R 1 *

1 WHEREAS, Increasing the amount of production of Nevada's
2 minerals, including, without limitation, copper, gold and silver, that
3 are exported worldwide would aid in the reduction of the trade
4 deficit of the United States and would thus be highly beneficial to
5 the national economy; and

6 WHEREAS, Mining supports a significant portion of the local
7 economies of rural Nevada and creates jobs that pay employees an
8 average of \$81,800 per year; and

9 WHEREAS, Exploration for minerals is a source of capital
10 investment in Nevada, supports the discovery of new mineral
11 deposits that may become future or expanded mines, contributes
12 significantly to state and local tax revenues and provides other
13 economic benefits to Nevada and local economies in Nevada; and

14 WHEREAS, Because approximately 87 percent of the land in
15 Nevada is managed and controlled by the Federal Government, most
16 mineral exploration and mining activities occur entirely or partially
17 on federal land and permits must be secured for those activities from
18 the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest
19 Service; and

20 WHEREAS, The permitting processes of the Bureau of Land
21 Management and the United States Forest Service for mineral
22 exploration and mine development are the source of significant and
23 problematic delays that cost jobs, injure Nevada's economy and
24 impede national economic interests; and

25 WHEREAS, An estimated 2,500 high-paying mining jobs are
26 currently being delayed for an unspecified and unreasonable period
27 because those permitting processes often require 3 years or longer to
28 complete; and

29 WHEREAS, Delays in the permitting process for mineral
30 exploration projects are creating a significant delay in the rate of
31 discovery of new mineral deposits that may be developed into new
32 or expanded mines; and

33 WHEREAS, Delays in the permitting process and the resulting
34 reduction in the rate of discovery of new mineral deposits are
35 significant reasons that gold and silver production from mines in
36 Nevada has declined dramatically in the last decade, which has
37 resulted in unrealized jobs and tax revenues that would otherwise be
38 generated from those mines; and

39 WHEREAS, The process of the Bureau of Land Management for
40 the review and publication of notices in the Federal Register
41 announcing the intent of the Bureau of Land Management to prepare
42 an environmental impact statement and the availability of draft and
43 final environmental impact statements often add up to 1 year to the
44 mine permitting process; and



1 WHEREAS, Expediting the permitting processes of the Bureau of
2 Land Management and the United States Forest Service to
3 materially diminish the time required to approve mineral exploration
4 and mine development projects would make a significant
5 contribution to Nevada's economy and the national economic
6 interests by increasing mining and mineral exploration jobs and
7 increasing tax revenues from mining, including, without limitation,
8 revenues from sales and use taxes, net proceeds taxes, modified
9 business taxes and property taxes; and

10 WHEREAS, Implementing procedures to expedite the permitting
11 of mineral exploration and mine development projects is of equal
12 importance to the economy of Nevada and the United States as the
13 similarly expedited permitting schemes already endorsed for
14 renewable energy projects; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF
16 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the 76th Session of the
17 Nevada Legislature hereby urge Congress to enact legislation or
18 take other appropriate action directing the Secretary of Agriculture,
19 the Secretary of the Interior, the Chief of the United States Forest
20 Service, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, the
21 Director of the Nevada State Office of the Bureau of Land
22 Management and the Forest Supervisor for the Humboldt-Toiyabe
23 National Forest to pursue, together with the appropriate
24 governmental entities in this State, methods and procedures that
25 expedite or may expedite the permitting processes for mineral
26 exploration and development of mines in this State; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of
28 the Bureau of Land Management are hereby urged to eliminate any
29 burdensome and unreasonable delays associated with the process of
30 the Bureau of Land Management for the review and publication of
31 notices in the Federal Register; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That, cooperatively with the appropriate
33 governmental entities in this State, the Secretary of Agriculture, the
34 Secretary of the Interior, the Chief of the United States Forest
35 Service, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, the
36 Director of the Nevada State Office of the Bureau of Land
37 Management and the Forest Supervisor for the Humboldt-Toiyabe
38 National Forest are hereby urged to establish streamlined permitting
39 time frames consistent with the goals of this State for economic
40 recovery and with national economic interests; and be it further

41 RESOLVED, That such a streamlined permitting process must
42 include the following requirements:

43 1. The Bureau of Land Management should approve or deny
44 any project that requires a notice within 15 calendar days after the
45 date of submittal of a complete notice application;



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2. The United States Forest Service should approve or deny any small exploration project that may be evaluated with a categorical exclusion within 4 months after the date of submittal of a complete application for the small exploration project;

3. The Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service should approve or deny any project that requires an exploration plan of operation within 4 months after the date of submittal of a complete application for the plan of operation;

4. The Bureau of Land Management's process for review and publication of notices in the Federal Register announcing the intent of the Bureau of Land Management to prepare an environmental impact statement or announcing the availability of a draft and final environmental impact statement should be completed in 2 weeks; and

5. The Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service should approve or deny a plan of operation for a mining project within 12 months after the date of submittal of a complete plan of operation for that mining project; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress is hereby urged to enact legislation or take other appropriate action directing the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Chief of the United States Forest Service, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, the Director of the Nevada Office of the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Supervisor for the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest to provide quarterly progress reports to Congress, the Speaker of the Nevada Assembly, the Majority Leader of the Nevada Senate and the Governor of Nevada setting forth the following information:

1. A list specifying each proposed mineral exploration and mining project that the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service are reviewing and the date that the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service began reviewing each of those projects;

2. The anticipated target date on which each proposed mineral exploration and mining project permit will be approved or denied;

3. An assessment of the performance of the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service in meeting the streamlined permitting objectives;

4. If the streamlined permitting objectives have not or may not be met, a detailed explanation of the reasons for failing to meet those objectives; and

5. Any additional resources that the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service need to meet the requirements of the streamlined permitting process; and be it further



1 RESOLVED, That Congress is hereby urged to enact legislation
2 or take other appropriate action directing the Secretary of
3 Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Chief of the United
4 States Forest Service, the Director of the Bureau of Land
5 Management, the Director of the Nevada State Office of the Bureau
6 of Land Management and the Forest Supervisor for the Humboldt-
7 Toiyabe National Forest to take all necessary steps to provide
8 adequate staffing and resources consistent with achieving the
9 streamlined permitting objectives; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and
11 transmit a copy of this resolution to the Vice President of the United
12 States as the presiding officer of the United States Senate, the
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives and each member of the
14 Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
16 passage.

